1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

CHAPTER FIVE

LAW AND ORDER

i

Zongu, as part of the Maharajah of Sikkim's private estate, is administered for him by one of the Kazi, or hereditary ministers and landowners. It is at present under the Rhennock Kazi, who has succeeded the Mali Kazi. Except on very rare occasions the Kazi does not visit the reserve; the Mandals and Muktair pay relatively frequent visits to Gangtok to pay over the taxes to him and to consult him on any problems of internal administration.

Administratively Zongu is divided into twelve villages, each with a Mandal[1] at its head. Until the beginning of this century there were no intermediaries between the Mandals and the Kazi in charge; but some thirty years ago, at the instance of the Maharani, the aunt of the present Maharajah, the office of Muktair[2] was instituted. The Muktair is superior to the Mandals; he can deal with misdemeanours carrying a fine of not more than Rs. 60, while the Mandals can only deal with fines of Rs. 30 or less; he has to supervise all tax-accounts, and visits each village twice yearly to inspect the fields and see that grain has not been planted in excess of the amount on which tax has been paid; he has also to make a register of births and deaths. At first he was also responsible for the collection of taxes, but Tafoor's father, when he held the office, made a muddle of this job, and the actual collection and payment of the monies reverted to the Mandals. I was told that the Muktair receives as salary 4 per cent of the money collected and 4 annas on each house, but the sum seems to me excessive.

The history of this office of Muktair gives a good illustration of

[1] The term *Mandal* is not a Lepcha nor even a Sikkimese word. It is the common word for the head of the village throughout Northern India. It is however in universal use among the Lepchas, having completely displaced the Sikkimese-Tibetan *La-chen* and the Lepcha *Jem-mi*.

[2] The Sikkimese-Tibetan term is *Tong-yoop*.

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

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The office of Mandal is hereditary, within the Lepcha meaning of the term; that is to say that the title resides in the extended family, and when the holder dies or becomes feeble through old age, it is given to the next most suitable male in the family; it often is the holder's eldest son, but may equally well be a younger brother or nephew of the holder. The position is probably older than the Tibetan colonisation of Sikkim, for some of the Mandals of Zongu are the eleventh or twelth of the family line to hold the position. In Lingthem Chala Mandal, the present holder of the title, is the third of his line to hold office; he has been Mandal for twenty years, succeeding his father's younger brother Tasso Nungyen, who in his turn had succeeded his own eldest brother Ogen. Before Ogen the office had been in old Serving's family; but Serving's father Pépo was exceedingly stupid and the only other suitable member of the family was already a lama attached to Talung monastery; therefore the title was taken from his line (the Tsel-telim *ptso*) and transferred to Chala Mandal's (Jam-yong *ptso*). The Tsel-telim *ptso* was originally by far the most powerful in the neighbourhood, but is now almost extinct, owing, it is said, to the *tamtoom* resulting from one ancestor who sold Lepchas as slaves to the Bhutanese.

The Mandal is normally spoken of as the 'landlord' of the village, and the other householders are called his 'tenants.' The Mandal holds the land under the Maharajah, who is the ultimate owner; the householders have the usufruct of the land but cannot transfer it outside their family without the Mandal's consent; for land to be transferred to a stranger from outside the village the permission of the Court is also necessary. The Mandal is responsible to the Court for the maintenance of good order in the village and for the collection of taxes; if there is a deficit he is liable to have to make it up. In relation to the other villagers he stands in the position of an elder relative—father or uncle or elder brother; he arranges the marriages of most of the young people, he looks after everybody's welfare and happiness, giving advice on personal or agricultural matters where they appear needed, and acting as intermediary between the villagers and the Court. It is necessary for the Mandal to be slightly richer than his 'tenants'; he has to entertain all distinguished visitors; he has to look after the orphaned and homeless (Chala Mandal had permanently living in

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

622 [736] his house lame orphaned Satéo and an invalid childless widower from Liklyang); he has to give more feasts than anybody else, and these feasts are expected to be better than those of ordinary people. The office carries with it certain privileges; the remission of house and seed tax, and the right to free labour, or *béti*. The Mandal has the right to three days' work a year from each household, but I do not think a careful tally is kept in Lingthem; Chala Mandal is not unreasonable in his demands and has I think free workers whenever he needs them.

Chala Mandal is a rather fat, benign-looking man of 59 with a mobile and expressive face and rather sardonically amused, twinkling little eyes; he has a small wen which, he explained, was the *tam-toom* of one of his parents while he was in the womb having killed a namprek-*fo* (a bird which developed a dewlap because it stole rice from the God Komsi*thing*). Compared with the other Lepchas of his age he is rather fat and short of breath; he suffers from lumbago, and is much distressed at his failure to produce a son. He has had in all four wives but only the last one, a widow, has been fertile; she bore him two daughters but of these the elder died and the surviving child is a baby.

Except that he had rather better food and clothes than his neighbours Chala was in no way distinguished as a child, or given preferential treatment; but as he grew up his parents and elders taught him how to talk to people politely and avoid evil words. When he was about fifteen he was taken by his 'grandfather' (actually his father's elder brother) to the then reigning Maharajah, and told how to address him. For three years he worked at the Court as a sort of groom, and then the reigning Maharajah died and was succeeded by the present Maharajah's elder brother. A month after his death Chala returned home. A little later an order came from the Court that he was to accompany the Maharajah on a long voyage; but together with his father, his 'grandfather,' and an old white-haired lama from Talung monastery he went on a deputation to the Court, taking with him as a gift a ceremonial scarf and a rupee.[3] His 'grandfather' begged the Maharajah to excuse

[431 177] [3] In Tibet and the neighbouring countries which have been influenced by its customs all formal occasions and gift-giving are accompanied by the present or exchange of a ceremonial scarf; this is a long piece of cloth, varying, according to the means and disposition of the giver, between butter muslin and the finest silk. In gifts from an inferior to a superior, or between equals if the giver wishes to flatter the recipient, one or more coins are given with the scarf. In the strictly graded society of Tibet there are infinite nuances in the

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

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[636]

TEMPA, THE DEPOSED MUKTAIR

CHALA MANDAL, THE HEAD OF THE VILLAGE

[Facing p. 128]

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

622 Chala from accompanying him abroad, explaining that the young man was to be his heir and that he, the 'grandfather,' was getting old and past his work and wanted Chala to help him. The Maharajah granted the request; he put a scarf round Chala's neck and presented him with a coat and length of cloth and gave him a certificate confirming him in the office of Mandal.

Chala Mandal is completely illiterate; he has never learned to read or write; he has, he says, to carry everything, all the accounts and the personal relationships and the long stories he knows and tells 'in his heart and belly.' He must not drink too much *chi* or his memory would go. In a very real way the Mandal has acted as 622 584 uncle for almost all his tenants, for, in the last twenty years, he has arranged every marriage except two in the neighbourhood. He does not plan in advance; when he thinks a boy or girl ripe for marriage he looks round for a suitable partner and then makes the suggestion to the child's uncles; if the arrangement is satisfactory to both parties the lamas consult the horoscopes to see if the projected marriage will turn out well and the arrangements are proceeded with. Even today when he is growing old he still has to arrange every marriage, in spite of the long marches which the rôle of *bek-bu*, or marriage arranger, entails. Chala Mandal also regulates most of the private affairs of his villagers, scolding and helping if they are extravagant or quarrelsome, or unco-operative; he is called into consultation and consults others on any affair of moderate importance.

622 538 With me he pretended to be extremely diffident but was obviously pleased with the respect I paid him; all the visits which we paid one another started out somewhat ceremoniously, though after a few minutes he would settle down and gossip and tell stories happily. He was an extremely good story teller with an astonishing memory; as well as the more serious mythology he would tell comic fables and anecdotes extremely well, mimicking the various voices and actions with most humorous precision; one of my most vivid memories is of him representing a rather foolish female devil consulting the oracle of her pubic hair which waved about in

[43] 177 manner of giving and receiving scarves to indicate the social distance between the two parties.

This giving of a scarf and coin, either alone, or with other gifts, has been completely accepted by the Lepchas, and will be found as a constantly recurring theme in sociological payments, such as marriage, and also often in sacrifices to the supernatural.

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

622 [538] answer to questions and which gave an answer which seemed so foolish to the devil that she tore the oracle up by the roots.[4] He is perhaps a trifle too easy-going and a few people appear to take advantage of his good nature; the village, as opposed to some of its less prosperous neighbours, has considerable arrears of taxes; the Mandal himself is considerably in debt. When animals are slaughtered for sacrifice he is in great demand as butcher to distribute the different portions; everybody knows him to be fair and nobody questions his decisions on this or other matters of greater importance. [183] He is very explicit about the main orientations of the culture; for example, he explained that the help that will be given by everybody to poor or indebted men was a special Lepcha custom; 'and I think it is a very good one because it makes everybody realise that they are part of one group and the happiness of one is the happiness of all.'

622 781 In some respects Chala Mandal exaggerated the casualness with which all Lepchas, except lamas, treat the minor details of religious rites or the performance of ordinary actions. A constantly recurring phrase, which almost turns into a catchword, in Lepcha conversation is *ket ma-nin*—'it doesn't matter'. The grain isn't covered and the birds will get it—*ket ma-nin*. There is no dried fish and the offering ought to have it—*ket ma-nin*. Chala Mandal was completely sceptical about new-fangled notions, such as the danger to people or plants from menstruating women, which have been imported from outside.

622 In the event of the Mandal dying without a suitable heir the *youmi* (see below) will act as substitute until the householders have chosen one of their number to become Mandal; preference would probably be given to a member of the same *ptso* but there is no obligation to do so. When a unanimous choice has been decided upon the name will be submitted in a petition to the Rhennock Kazi. For two years the candidate will be on approval, and only after he has shown himself to be thoroughly satisfactory will his tenure of office be officially confirmed. Even when the new Mandal is closely related to the old one he must be formally elected by the householders and confirmed in office by the Maharajah and Kazi. The chief qualifications demanded of a Mandal are wisdom, character, popularity, and adequate wealth.

624 The offices of Muktair and Mandal can be held by lamas; the other two offices, *youmi* and *gyapŏn* can not, as these offices may

[4] See Appendix V, b.

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

624 and Itup the son of Takneum *youmi*. There is also a *gyapõn* in Panung and one in Liklyang.

iii

627 The objects of the four above-named offices are twofold; the regulation of intra-village affairs and the collection of taxes for the State. Within the village crime has to be prevented and possibly punished, quarrels stopped, and the poor and needy helped.

651 There is a fixed tax of Rs. 5 a year on each house, a small tax on certain grain seeds which are sown for crops and a sales tax on the cardamum fruit, which is regulated according to the price fetched and automatically deducted at selling.[5] The total tax payable by the fifty houses under Chala Mandal's jurisdiction is Rs. 3500, averaging Rs. 70[6] per household. The money is collected by the *gyapõn* and taken by the Mandal to Gangtok. Although the payment of the taxes is somewhat resented, especially by the older men, it does not seem to me to bear hardly on the Lepchas. Both money and the cash-producing crop of cardamum were introduced together at the beginning of this century—formerly taxes were paid in kind —and everybody grows more than sufficient cardamum to pay their taxes. There are nevertheless some arrears of taxes in Lingthem; indeed a couple of households are seven years in arrear, and that not through poverty but through feckelessness. So feckless are they that the Mandal has threatened that if they do not pay by the next year he will refuse to be responsible for them, in which case they will be summoned to the chief Court in Gangtok. Generally

[5] The actual taxes on seed are as follows:—

Wet rice	Rs. –/8 on 8 lbs.
Millet and maize	Rs. –/12 on 8 lbs.
Dry rice	Rs. 1/– on 32 lbs.

Other crops are not taxed. The tax on cardamum is graduated according to the selling price per maund of 80 lbs.

If the maund fetches			Rs. 10/–	the tax is	Rs. –/14
„	„	„	Rs. 20/–	„	Rs. 1/8
„	„	„	Rs. 40/–	„	Rs. 2/8.

This tax has recently been reduced. Formerly it was at Rs. 2/8 at under Rs. 20, and Rs. 5/– over that sum. The 1936 price of cardamum was Rs. 12/– a maund. There is also a small tax, not very efficiently collected, on animals pastured in, or produce gathered from the forest.

[6] About £5 7 0 or 26 dollars.

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

782 787 789 washed entrails, together with a small bamboo container filled with the goat's blood, was placed on the ground in front of the altar. The old man and woman now chanted as [622] before, after which the meat was taken away and distributed to all present under the supervision of the village Mandal, or head-man. The goat was offered first to Konchen and then to all the other spirits. During the whole of this celebration none of the spectators, of which there must have been fifty or sixty, paid the slightest attention to what was going on. As we later noticed, this was the case on all such occasions: the people merely sat round drinking and talking; but I did hear a child reproved for making too much noise while the actual chanting was in progress.

* * * * *

491 If one takes the night mail from Calcutta it is easily possible, by motoring from Siliguri, to reach Gangtok, the capital of independent Sikkim, well before lunch on the following morning. The motor road at present ends at Gangtok, but the Talung Valley can be reached the following evening by any moderately active walker. The actual distance is about twenty-five miles; but included in this is a descent of nearly three thousand feet, immediately followed by an ascent of like amount. This drop and subsequent rise is repeated again at the end of the journey, but fortunately on a smaller scale. If really in a hurry it would be possible to reach the Talung in something under thirty-six hours from Calcutta; but having crossed the rickety suspension bridge across the Teesta, the sole means of access to the valley, one steps backward in time, so to speak, into another world. In 181 Calcutta (said to be the second city in the British Empire; but in my opinion an easy first in dirt and squalor) Englishmen, and others, toil all day in a vile climate for the sole purpose of acquiring more wealth than their fellows: but in the Talung Valley, which has meadows as green as any in Europe, and some of the finest mountain scenery in the world, money is considered of little importance, and one man

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

CHAPTER 2

Himalayan Hotch-potch: an Anthology of Sikkim

The country.

"SIKKIM—Native State in the Eastern Himalayas, with an area of 2,818 square miles. It is bounded on the north and east by Tibet; on the south-east by Bhutan; and on the south by Darjeeling District; and on the west by Nepal. The Tibetan name for Sikkim is pronounced Denjong, and more rarely Demjong or Demoshong; and the people are called *Rong-pa*, or 'dwellers in the valleys,' the term *Mom-pa*, or 'dwellers in the low country,' being used occasionally to describe the Lepcha inhabitants."

Gazetteer of India, Vol. 22. 1908.

The climate.

"The climate varies between the tropical heat of the valleys and the Alpine cold of the snowy ranges. The rainfall is very heavy, averaging 137 inches annually at Gangtok. From November to February the rainfall is light, and the weather in November and December is clear and fine. In March thunderstorms commence and, growing more and more frequent, usher in the rainy season, which lasts till October."

Ibid.

Encouragement for the timid traveller.

"Even in the most remote regions of Sikkim one's personal safety is assured, for the inhabitants are a peaceful and hospitable folk, and on this point even the most nervous need have no fear. Ladies travelling by themselves may undertake expeditions to the furthermost bungalows, without being subjected to the least inconvenience, their *sirdar* or headman always regarding their protection as his own personal charge.

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

Up towards the mountains there is a big cliff on which 614
many monkeys used to live. Below it was a limpid pool, in 773
which a young girl was in the habit of bathing. One day, when she was leaving the water, a monkey came down to her and the two lay together. In due course a child was born and this was the first member of the Sungvel clan. Now the land in these parts belonged to some Tibetans, seven of whom came one day to gather honey. When they saw how steep the place was they realised that they could never climb it, so they asked Sungvel, who by then had a son of his own, to climb it for them. Sungvel told the seven Tibetans to sit in a row by the pool, since if they came nearer they would be stung by the bees. He and his son then climbed the cliff. They tied their ankles together so as to get a better hold on the smooth rock-face, and by mounting on one another's shoulders managed to reach the place where the honey was. The son tore it out with his hands and threw it down. As soon as the bees saw what was happening they swarmed out and started to attack the seven men who were sitting below. They were stung so badly that the pain was unendurable: the only thing to do was to jump into the water, and so they were all drowned. After this Sungvel and his son took possession of the land, but the clan is now extinct.

I have already said that the Lepchas have neither tribal 636
nor clan organisation; but in order to regulate their dealings with the state certain officials have been appointed. Firstly, there is the *Mukhtiyar*, who deals direct with the Maharaja's agent in Gangtok. This is a comparatively new office, the present holder being only the third in succession.

There is but one Mukhtiyar for the whole of Jongu, and his 636
duty is to supervise and co-ordinate the work of the separate 622
village *Mandals* or headmen. The Mandals collect taxes in [651]
their respective villages and go once every year with the actual cash to Gangtok: but since most of them are completely illiterate they deliver their accounts verbally to the Mukhtiyar, who records them in writing. The Mukhtiyar 636
receives no pay but is entitled to a commission of four annas a year for each house on which taxes are paid. He tours all

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

636 over his district twice each year, when he assesses the tax to be paid on areas newly brought under cultivation. He also registers births and deaths. At the end of each tour he reports to Gangtok and renders his accounts in person. It may be noted in passing that local officials, whatever their rank, have at all times direct access to the Maharaja, with whom they may discuss their problems in person. The system is almost exactly the same as English feudalism at its best, and is free from the rigidity that makes British Indian administration so inelastic and impersonal.

The office of Mukhtiyar is not necessarily hereditary, since it can only be successfully filled by one who can at least read and write. The first Mukhtiyar of Jongu was a Lama of Lingtem, and when he died the office was offered to his son Tafoor. This man, who is also a Lama, is one of the most intelligent men in the village, and was one of our best informants. He felt, however, that he was unfitted for the post, since his education had been confined almost entirely to [789] classical Tibetan. Also he was the only man in the village who had learnt how to keep away rain; and because of this the whole village begged him to refuse the office. The present Mukhtiyar does not live in Lingtem, and we only met him once, when he came to pay his respects.

622 The post of village Mandal is hereditary. If he has no son, as is at present the case in Lingtem, the office will eventually devolve upon the man who marries his daughter; but when a man has no children some near paternal relative will usually be appointed. In addition to their work as tax-collectors 622 692 Mandals have authority to inflict fines up to thirty rupees, but a Mukhtiyar may order a fine of sixty. Any case requir- [685] ing a bigger fine than this has to be reported to the Durbar in Gangtok, which also settles cases in connection with misappropriation of land; but there have been no such cases in 622 Lingtem since many years. Mandals receive no pay from the state, but each household is required to give him three days' free labour (or three men for one day) a year. This is to compensate him for the neglect of his fields which would otherwise ensue during his absence on state business.

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

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Chaia Mandal, the Headman of Lingtem.

[411
●622]

[333]

Lepcha in national dress.

[facing p. 107]

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

but the general effect in the gloomy rooms of a semi-darkened monastery is often not unpleasing.

Apart from its actual built-in decoration every monastery has a few hanging wall-pictures, or *Thang-Ka* as they are called. These are generally painted on canvas or cotton, which is first prepared by stretching it while damp over a wooden frame, from which it is detached when completed. The mounted Tibetan painting generally has a tricoloured silk border, usually of red, yellow and blue. According to Waddell this "is alleged to represent the spectrum colours of the rainbow, which separates sacred objects from the material world. The outer border of blue is broader than the others, and broadest at its lowest border, where it is usually divided by a vertical patch of brocade embroidered with the dragons of the sky. A veil is invariably added as a protection against the grimy smoke of incense, lamps and dust. The veil is of flimsy silk, often adorned with sacred symbols, and it is hooked up when the picture is exhibited." There were several such pictures in our room at Lingtem, but all were of very inferior quality, and in no way to be compared with some of the really beautiful works of art one often sees in Tibetan monasteries.

* * * * *

I started this chapter with an account of the local Church's leader, and it seems fitting to close it with a few details about the head of the civil administration. Chala Mandal is fifty-nine, but like most Lepchas does not look his age, and would never believe that he was nearly twenty years my senior. He has been ill for several weeks, and does not often leave his house. It was divined that his trouble comes from Subdok Mung. It appears that the Mandal's first wife was a Mun, and that when she died her body, instead of being buried, was cremated, a rite that is usually accorded only to members of the Church. The burial ceremonies were carried out by Lamas, no Mun, which was not in accordance with custom, being present. For this reason her soul was angry, and

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

instead of turning eventually into a god it transformed itself into an emanation of Subdok Mung, and as such has been troubling the Mandal ever since. The local Mun and Lamas have held a consultation, as a result of which it has been decided that certain ceremonies are necessary; but these will not be efficacious unless carried out by a particular Mun who lives in Gyatong. The Mandal sent three times for this man, but he always refused to come; and it was only after being offered a substantial present of *chi* that he at last consented to attend. We were invited to witness the ceremony. When we arrived most of the family was collected in the kitchen, where the old Mun was seated with the usual offerings in front of him; there were several heaps of grain, lumps of butter, and one or two lighted lamps, the whole arranged on a cloth and placed on top of a winnowing-fan. By his side was a bowl of *chi*, out of which he dipped with a piece of banana leaf while making his incantations. He started by asking the demons to accept what he was giving them and finished by asking the gods in general to bless the Mandal, and implored them particularly to give him a son. The actual words he used were somewhat more Rabelaisian than my bald description suggests, and caused much laughter. After about a quarter of an hour the "specialist" handed over to the local Mun, when the offering was taken outside the house and placed on top of a fence. Nearby was a tethered ox, which was later killed with a bow and arrow by Gongyop's son. This beast was being offered to the Subdok Mung as a substitute for the Mandal's life. We always enjoyed attending these ceremonies; for apart from their inherent interest we were invariably offered a portion of the sacrifice, a most welcome addition to our otherwise unvaried diet of stringy chicken.

The Mandal's house is equalled only by that of Tafoor, and has a very fine and elaborate altar-room, complete with gilded images, and the twelve volumes of the *Boom*, the shortened version of the Kangyur. Although the Mandal is not himself a Lama it is usual for all who can afford to do so

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

159 to have an altar-room, and also a set of books, to read which
342 Lamas are called in as necessary. I noticed that by means of
622 bamboo conduits water was made available inside the house,
[312 where it dripped into a huge copper vessel. This was the only
336] house in Lingtem which might be described as having "running water."

159 The Mandal was an only child, and when his father had
587 already handed over most of his work, he adopted another boy in order to have someone to work the fields. On the death of his father the Mandal handed his wife, of whom he was growing tired, over to this adopted brother; and then married again. The first wife died shortly after, whereupon the Mandal gave his brother the second; and himself married a third. The second wife, who died four years ago, did not care for this arrangement and soon returned to her own home, whereupon the adopted brother was presented with wife number three; and the Mandal married yet again.
[585] Since he and his brother were living in the same house no ceremony was performed when these cast-off women were handed on; but this would have been necessary had the two brothers been living in separate houses. The Mandal has an only daughter, and passionately desires to have a son. It is this, he says, that has led him into matrimony time after
[789] time; and he has not finished yet! The people saw he will never have a son, since in the time of his father a curse was laid on the family. This was done by an evil-minded Lama, who thought that if there were any more children they would claim the land adjacent to their house. This was the property of some people who had died without heirs, and it had not at that time been reallotted.

159 It is generally believed that the Mandal is not the son of his
[848] supposed father, who was impotent. Once, when the father was absent from home, his mother, anxious lest the family die out altogether, induced a certain man to come and visit her
159 daughter-in-law. The story is known to the whole of the
837 village, and is said to have been made public by Chala's own biological father. He appears to have been a man of

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

outstanding physique; for Chala's mother, when she was an old woman, later told her son that she was terrified at their first encounter. He seems also to have been noted for his promiscuity, a trait which Chala has himself inherited.

In addition to his official duties the Mandal gives much thought to the arrangement of local marriages. He has been doing this for so many years that he has now come to think of young people principally in terms of their suitability as possible marriage partners. He has so far acted as go-between for no less than sixty couples, and nowadays nobody ever thinks of asking anyone else to undertake this duty. In these cases he is called in not as village headman, but merely as an experienced member of the community whose opinion is trusted. His duties as Mandal, however, take him frequently to all the surrounding villages, and since he is on intimate terms with everybody, he is always in a position to make suggestions. Many marriages are of course settled by the families or individuals concerned; but even in cases such as these certain formal arrangements are later thought to be necessary. The ordinary man does not know the correct form of speech proper to such occasions, and for this reason the Mandal's services are still in much demand.

The Mandal's knowledge of his district is encyclopædic, and although he can neither read nor write he is able to quote without hesitation or mistake details of local administration which one would normally expect to find only in a book of statistics. He is slightly ashamed of being illiterate, but does not realise that his memory is quite extraordinary. He never smokes, and drinks less than others because he has to remember everything "in his heart and belly," as the saying is, and might otherwise forget. Because he was ill and lived a long way away we did not see a great deal of him, but on the few occasions when he came to the monastery his great delight was to sit on a chair. The only ones we had were of the camp variety; and having been with me all over the Himalayas were in the last stages of disrepair, and liable to fall to pieces at any moment. To the

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

159 Mandal, however, they represented the height of comfort,
●622 and he begged me to give him one as a parting gift. This I did; and the last view I had of him was as he disappeared into the forest, with the chair perched precariously on his head.

* * * * *

602 Although extremely laborious it would be possible to show, by means of charts, the connection between the various people of Lingtem. Nearly everybody is related, either by blood or marriage, to everyone else. In a general account such as this, however, these details would not make for easy reading, and I propose therefore to reserve them for publication in some appropriate scientific journal.

776 very numerous; but none of the many so-called Lepcha deities enumerated by Mr. Risley [1] are Lepcha at all — all of them are purely Tibetan Lamaistic gods of Hindoo type, even to their names. The truly Lepcha divinities, on the contrary, are mostly of an animistic type. The majority are either the malignant ghosts of deceased ancestors or the spirits inhabitating natural objects — for the Lepcha views every animal, plant, river and stone as having a spiritual personality like his own.

The benevolent class of spirits are called *Rāam* in contradistinction to the malicious *Mung* who are supposed to cause disease, death and other disasters. The chief of the good spirits is *Ta-shi Tak-bo Rāam* [2] or "The Sky-existing Head-Father-Spirit", who also is called *Tashi-ting* [3] or "The Sky-existing Lord". This ancient name for the chief Lepcha divinity was transferred to a Lamaist Saint by the Lama who composed the afore mentioned *Tashe-sung* in order to secure for his Lamaist hero the homage and worship of the Lepchas [4]. Many of the minor good spirits are of the nature of good fairies. One of these is a water nymph called 'The Rainbow Fairy' (*Tung-kung-mit*) who haunts the rainbow spray of rivers and cascades; and those who would fish at such places usually worship her [5]. Those spirits are sometimes entitled 'The Unseen' (*Mā*) and the prayer to them is called *Mā-e*.

The malignant devils or *Mung* [6] are of many kinds. Those who infest the depths of the forest are called "Angry fire" (*Mi-gdut*) and in appearance like flames of fire as tall as the highest trees. Those inhabiting swampy muddy springs are *Lang-nong* [7] and those
[753] haunting rocks and caves are *Lang-s'i*. These latter cause fatal dropsy in those persons who desecrate their haunts by lighting fires or soiling the stones in the vicinity. The especial abode of the chief Mung, who is called 'The father Devil', is at a rock amidst ruinous landslips on the gorge of Sivok [8] where the great affluent river of the Sikhimese mountains, the Tista, rushes into the plains. Another celebrated Mung is "The goge" (*A-kyong*) who inhabits a cliff in the forest of Gel below Darjiling.

Amongst deified ancestors the chief are Fodung Ting and Tek-kong Tek and their wives Ne-zong Ñyo and Ne-Kong Nal. These are the first traditional chiefs of the tribe, and the name Tek-kong, meaning 'to preserve independence', is suggestive of some struggle in which this legendary chief was successful [9], though the Lepchas never seem to have
●[622] developed any organized coherence or polity. Their so-called 'Kings' were only headmen, and lived in huts little better than the poorest members of the tribe.

Worship is rendered almost exclusively to the bad spirits and not to the good. For,

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192 [1]) loc. cit. 9.

[2]) *Ta-shi* is from *Ta* sky and *shi* to be. *Tak*, a contraction for *Tiak* head, and *bo* father — literally 'the giver'.

[3]) *Ting* (*A-Ting*) = lord or supreme, probably from *Ting*, to soar aloft (? hence *Ting-kyi*, the Kestrel or Sparrow-hawk). Compare with Burmese '*A-ting*', honorific exclamation to superiors.

[4]) The name in this book is altered to *Ta-she*, the Tibetan *Shé* a judge being substituted for the Lepcha affix *Shi*.

[5]) Two classes of spirits incidentally mentioned by Mr. M. (p. 21) are 'personal demons' *Nang-lym-no* and *Ka-t'ung-ñi*, guardians of males and females respectively.

[6]) This word is perhaps related to the Chinese *Mo*, a devil.

[7]) This *Lang* is said to mean „fallen down" and not *Lang*, a stone, though this is doubtful.

[8]) *Sāk-fok*, literally impenetrable jungle, debris or peelings. This wild ravine is lined by the debris of the inner mountains and overgrown with densest jungle.

[9]) Other 'Kings', who are mentioned in songs, are Turve and Sākong. This last was said by the Lamas to have visited Hades and returned to tell the tale — a *De-lok* — as noted by me in my Buddhism of Tibet p. 166.